

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111

Appln No.: 10/594,946

REMARKS

Claims 3-11 and 13-16 were pending in the application. By this Amendment, Applicant cancels claims 4-6, 12, and 14 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant adds new independent claims 17-20. No new matter has been added.

Claim Objections

Claims 11 and 12 are objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form.

Applicant cancels claim 12. Further, claim 11 complies with 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c). Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §112 6th Paragraph

Claims 3-11 and 13-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 6th paragraph.¹ Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's basis for this rejection, but nevertheless amends the claims to delete the "means for" recitation and requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 13 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Takenaga et al. (US 6191704, hereinafter "Takenaga"). Applicant traverses the rejection.

Claims 13 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 14. Accordingly, claim 13 should be allowed. Further, claim 16 recites features similar to those recited in allowable claim 14. Accordingly, claim 16 should also be allowed.

¹ While the Office Action does not expressly state, it appears that the Examiner is basing the rejection on §112, 1st or 2nd paragraph, in combination with an interpretation under § 112, 6th Par.

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Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 3 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Raboison et al. (US 5706355, hereinafter "Raboison"). Applicant traverses the rejection.

Claim 3 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 4. Accordingly, claim 3 should be allowed. Claim 15 has been amended to include features similar to allowable claim 4. Accordingly, claim 15 should also be allowed.

New Claims

Claims 17 and 19 include features similar to allowable claim 5, which has now been canceled. Claims 18 and 20 include features similar to allowable claim 6, which has also been canceled by this Amendment.

Accordingly, claims 17-20 should also be in condition for allowance.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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